

TABLE 1

**REASONS RESIDENTS DO NOT
ROUTINELY EXERCISE THEIR RIGHTS**

1. Residents are intimidated by the idea of appearing in any way to criticize the nursing home.
2. Most residents do not know that they have specified rights and do not know what their rights are in a nursing home.
3. Most residents do not even think about their problems and concerns in any context related to their “rights.”
4. Residents have very few opportunities to exercise control over their lives or to have intellectual discussions.
5. Residents have few relationships in which to practice interactive or assertiveness skills or negotiate their rights.
6. Even residents who are aware of their rights must choose their “battles” and often put up with daily violations of their individuality and dignity because: (a) it requires too much strength to challenge each encounter; (b) they are easily labeled troublemakers; (c) they are dependent for their basic care on those very people and, therefore, hesitant to criticize, and, often, (d) they experience a sense of defeatism.
7. Most residents have come to accept that many of their rights are violated as a part of the daily nursing home routine and, therefore, would never articulate them as problems about which anything can be done.
8. Many residents face a tension between their desire for independence and their need for assistance.
9. Residents often feel more comfortable championing another's problem than asking for help for themselves.
10. Residents face physical, emotional, psychological, social, and/or mental disabilities that make it difficult for them to voice their concerns.
11. Residents' autonomy is undermined from the start by the very fact that most residents would rather not be in a nursing home; many did not have much of a role or choice in the decision to be there, and most have no other options.

Source: National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform, Nursing Home Residents' Rights Project, 1828 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036